

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 ACDA-05

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2774

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMCONSUL ASMARA

USUN NEWYORK 3677

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY JUSAKA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

S E C R E T CAIRO 2788

FROM MAESTRONE

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, MASS, US, ET

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN AMMO RESUPPLY

REF: STATE 5886; 58897; 58955; ADDIS ABABA 3092

SUMMARY: MFA UNDERSEC EL SADR HAS TOLD EMBASSY THAT
ALTHOUGH GOE DOES NOT ITSELF MAINTAIN FORMAL CONTACT WITH
ELF/PLF, STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO TRANSMIT PRESS GUIDANCE
PROMPTLY. EL SADR EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT EFFORTS TO FIND
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NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO ETHIOPIAN SITUATION "GOING BADLY"

AND THE HE (GOE) WISHES TO SEE SOLUTION WHICH WILL GIVE ERITREA SOME FORM OF AUTONOMY. EGYPT IS BEING CRITICIZED BY SOME ARAB COUNTRIES FOR BEING OUT-OF-STEP IN NOT SUPPORTING ELF/PLF TO GREATER EXTENT. END SUMMARY

1. POL/ECON COUNSELOR CALLED ON MFA UNDERSEC NAGUIB EL SADR MORNING MARCH 17 TO DISCUSS QUESTION OF PASSING OF PRESS GUIDANCE BY EGYPTIANS TO LOCAL ELF/PLF OFFICIALS. EL SADR WHO, AMONG OTHER MATTERS, HAS JURISDICTION OVER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, SAID HE WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA. GOE IS MOST INTERESTED IN SEEING CONFLICT BETWEEN ELF AND GOVT FORCES BE BROUGHT TO A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND THAT ERITREA BE ABLE TO EXIST IN SOME FORM OF AUTONOMOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHIOPIA. ERITREA IS A SPECIAL SITUATION, EL SADR SAID, AND WAS RECOGNIZED AS SUCH BY UN PRIOR TO ITS TAKEOVER BY HAILE SELASSIE.

2. EL SADR SAID HE REALIZED THAT US DOES NOT MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH ELF/PLF, BUT IN REALITY GOE ALSO DOES NOT HAVE FORMAL CONTACT. REQUEST TO TRANSMIT PRESS GUIDANCE IS A BIT DELICATE, THEREFORE, FOR EGYPTIANS. "HOWEVER, IT CAN BE DONE; IT IS ALL IN THE MANNER IN WHICH IT IS DONE". SADR SAID HE WILL SEE THAT AN APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL IN MFA AFRICAN DEPT. PASSES ON PRESS GUIDANCE DURING COURSE OF SOCIAL CONTACT WITH ELF/PLF REP(S) WHICH WILL BE ARRANGED PROMPTLY. (COMMENT: IMPRESSION GAINED WAS THAT DESPITE FORMAL SITUATION OF NO CONTACT, THERE ARE FAIRLY REGULAR MEETINGS ON AN INFORMAL BASIS.)

3. EL SADR INDICATED THAT GOE UNDERSTOOD EFFORTS AT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ELF AND EPMG WERE NOT PROGRESSING WELL. HE REFERRED TO SUDANCES ACTIONS TO BRING ABOUT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AS "GOING BADLY". EL SADR SAID EPMG HAD SENT TWO DELEGATIONS TO CAIRO IN PAST MONTHS, MOST RECENTLY IN JAN, TO EXPLAIN THEIR POSITION. GOE NOW WAS BEING ACCUSED BY OTHER MORE RADICAL ARAB COUNTRIES OF BEING OUT-OF-STEP WITH ARAB POSITION WHICH SUPPORTS ELF LARGELY BECAUSE IT IS PREDOMINANTLY MOSLEM. HE (AND OSTENSIBLY ALSO GOE) DOES NOT VIEW SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA ALONG RELIGIOUS LINES. HOWEVER, SOME FORMULA SHOULD BE WORKED OUT TO ALLOW ERITREA AUTONOMY.

4. IN GOING OVER PRESS GUIDANCE EL SADR QUERIED "ABOUT
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\$50 MILLION ARMS REQUEST TO US FROM EPMG AND HOW US WAS GOING TO HANDLE THIS MATTER." COUNSELOR SAID HE DID NOT HAVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING EPMG MILITARY ASSISTANCE REQUEST. HOWEVER, TRADITIONAL MAP FOR ETHIOPIA DURING PAST 5-6 YEARS HAD BEEN MUCH SMALLER THAN THAT (APPROXIMATELY \$9-13 MILLION PER YEAR). IN THIS CONNECTION IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT (AS REFLECTED IN PRESS GUIDANCE) US WAS VERY DESIROUS OF SEEING ETHIOPIAN SITUATION BROUGHT TO NEGOTIATED PEACEFUL RESOLUTION. CONFLICT IN

ERITREA HAD GONE ON FOR TOO MANY YEARS ALREADY AND PEOPLE OF AREA DESERVED RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE. EL SADR SAID THAT SOMALIS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN TO EGYPTIANS ABOUT \$50 MILLION REQUEST. HE NOTED AT THIS POINT SOMALI AMBASSADOR MIGHT BE IN BETTER POSITION TO SERVE AS VEHICLE TO TRANSMIT MATERIAL TO ELF/PLF. COUNSELOR DID NOT COMMENT ON THIS POINT.

5. A BRIEF AIDE MEMOIRE WAS LEFT WITH EL SADR INDICATING THAT PRESS GUIDANCE SHOULD BE TRANSMITTED TO ELF/PLF ASAP IN MANNER GOE DEEMS MOST EFFECTIVE. IT REQUESTED THAT MINIMAL NATURE OF US RESPONSE TO EPMG REQUEST FOR AMMO RESUPPLIES BE STRESSED AND IT BE POINTED OUT US IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGING EPMG AND OTHER PARTIES TO PURSUE DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS TOWARDS PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

6. EL SADR SAID HE WOULD NOTIFY US AS SOON AS ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN ON TRANSMITTAL OF PRESS GUIDANCE TO ELF/PLF OFFICIALS IN CAIRO.
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